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Medical
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(P)

SMITH, H.L.

Abstract of a Plan
FOR
THE FORMATION
OF
SELF-SUPPORTING
CHARITABLE AND PAROCHIAL
DISPENSARIES.



SELF-SUPPORTING
CHARITABLE AND PAROCHIAL
DISPENSARIES.

THE following is an abstract of Mr. Smith's Exposition of his Plan for the formation of Self-supporting, Charitable, and Parochial Dispensaries, and is published in pursuance of a Resolution passed at a Meeting, held at No. 32, Sackville-street, on Saturday, the 20th of March, 1830, the Right Hon. LORD VERNON, in the Chair.

It is intended to give information respecting, 1, The object of these Institutions ; 2, The facts which show the great importance of that object ; 3, The plan of effecting it ; and 4, The progress which has already been made towards its accomplishment.

1. The object of the proposed Dispensaries is to concur in the preservation of the industrious classes of labourers from pauperism, by affording them opportunities of providing, during health, for the necessities of sickness ; and to extend these

advantages *to their wives and children*, which is not done by any of the Clubs or Friendly Societies at present existing. It is, therefore, calculated to form Institutions auxiliary to those Societies, as well as to direct all the other efforts of charity with more discrimination and effect.

2. Among the facts indicative of the importance of these objects, are the following:—

The working community of this country may be divided into Three Classes : in the first class, are those who are willing and able to maintain their families, by honest industry ; in the second class, are those who are willing, but unable, in consequence of temporary misfortunes, or of low wages, or sickness, to maintain their families ; and in the third, are all those who are denominated paupers, or who entirely depend on the assistance of others.

The labourers of the first class are independent, so long as they continue able to work ; and those of the second class are only dependent in certain circumstances. But when the first become unable to work, they fall into the second class, and both these classes are continually falling into the third.

When the industrious labourer becomes burthened with a family, or when his wages are much

lowered, or when sickness attacks him, or any of his family, he begins to get into difficulties. No cause is more common than the last ; and it generally leaves the labourer's family in debt to the medical practitioner, or compels them to deprive themselves of some of their comforts, in order that the bill may be paid. A second attack of sickness, or a repetition of other calamities, makes them applicants for parish relief. This is in a great proportion of cases first sought in the form of medical attendance and medicine ; but soon becomes required in every other shape. The labourer has now lost his self-dependence ; his cottage soon loses its air of comfort ; he is less industrious, and, perhaps, becomes less sober ; his wife and children lose their self-respect ; and all the family may often be traced along the successive steps which lead from idleness to crime. This is a picture unfortunately so familiar to those who are acquainted with the character and habits of the poor, as not to require to be dwelt upon.

The mode in which the overseers of parishes endeavour to meet these evils, is often injudicious, and the removal of families from places where they are known, and might earn a livelihood, to their own parishes, merely in consequence of temporary sickness, is one of the many disadvantages arising out

of these circumstances. The arrangements made with medical practitioners, to secure attendance on sick paupers, is also, in almost every instance, most objectionable.

The duty of attending to them is contracted for; and that practitioner is generally preferred, who will take the parish on the lowest terms. A natural consequence of this is, that the sick poor are often neglected, and lose their health, and with it their means of maintaining themselves by labour. These and many other evils flow from the present system of farming the Sick Poor of Parishes; and the practice of farming prevails in almost every district throughout England; and is a constant source of dissatisfaction, not only to the poor, but to all who take an interest in them, including the medical practitioners themselves.

At present, there exists in Hospitals and Dispensaries, a partial means of avoiding these evils; and the benefit of these admirable charities is particularly felt by that class of the industrious poor, who merely require to be assisted when sick, and can get on without assistance, when restored to health and activity. Yet, not to mention that there are many parts of the country, to which the advantages of these Institutions do not extend, it is well known, that of those applying to these establish-

ments, many might be enabled to do without their aid, if they were habituated to lay aside a small portion of what they can earn when they are in health.

The advantages of Mr. Smith's Plan, then, are, that it affords the labourer opportunities, and holds out to him encouragements, to make this provision in health, for what he may require in sickness ; and consequently tends to preserve him from wholly depending on the charity of others in any circumstances ; and especially, from becoming a dependent on parish-pay. It tends to preserve the first class of labourers *in self dependance*, and to prevent them from falling into the second class, or both into the third. It tends also to raise the lowest into the second, and the second into the first class, or that of self-dependant labourers. It further provides more effectually for the care of the poor of parishes in sickness ; and offers the means of remunerating the medical practitioner in a less objectionable manner.

These encouragements, opportunities, and provisions, will be seen to be comprehended in the following Plan.

3. PLAN OF THE SELF-SUPPORTING CHARITABLE AND PAROCHIAL DISPENSARIES.

Mr. Smith proposes, that there shall be established in every Market-Town, and considerable Village in the Kingdom, with the concurrence of the principal inhabitants, a Dispensary, to which such persons only shall be admitted as patients who cannot afford to pay in the usual manner for medical advice and drugs; the patients being as follows:—First, or Free Class; consisting of Labourers, willing to subscribe something for themselves, and allowed to subscribe, on the recommendation of a clergyman, or of two respectable householders; or, if a servant, of the master or mistress of such servant. The Members of this Class to be furnished with a Blue Ticket.

Second Class, or Charity Patients; not able to subscribe for themselves, but recommended by the Honorary Subscribers to the Dispensary. The Members of this Class to be furnished with a White Ticket.

Third Class, Parish Paupers; unable to subscribe for themselves, but admitted by a contract with the Overseers; by whom they are to be fur-

nished with a Yellow Ticket, entitling them to admission.

The Funds of the Dispensary are to be derived from three sources: first, from the subscriptions of the Free Class; secondly, from the subscriptions of benevolent individuals; and, thirdly, from the sums paid by the parishes.

Free Members to contribute a certain weekly sum. Honorary Subscribers to be allowed to recommend one patient for each half-guinea subscribed. Parishes to contribute according to their respective population.

The rate of the Free Member's contribution probably need not in any part of the kingdom exceed four shillings and fourpence *per annum*, or a penny weekly: it should be collected either weekly, monthly, or quarterly, so as to suit the convenience even of the poorest who desire to subscribe. The Free Members should not only enjoy the usual advantages of a Dispensary, but be entitled by the Blue Ticket to priority of attendance. In long illnesses they may perhaps be supplied with a nurse, cordials, food, linen, &c. If it is deemed expedient to hold any annual Festival or Holiday, the Free Members should alone be allowed to attend on such occasions; and certain rewards might be allotted to such of them as

were known to be peculiarly deserving, to have brought up a large family creditably, to have lived long with their masters and mistresses, &c.

Children to be admitted as Free Members until they are fifteen years of age, for half of the usual contribution.

Parishes should contribute a certain sum, to be determined upon by the Dispensary Committee, for every 100 of their population; the rate being regulated by the distance of the Parish from the Dispensary.

The Honorary subscriptions and Parish payments to be kept distinct from the Free Fund, and the expenses of the Institution to be paid quarterly. The Medical Officers of the Dispensary to be remunerated according to the number of the patients which each has attended in sickness.

The extra supplies to patients in sickness to be allowed under the direction of a Visiting Committee, and chiefly, if not entirely, to Members of the Free Class.

Every regularly educated practitioner residing in the district, comprehended in the arrangements of each Dispensary, to be allowed to offer himself as a Medical officer of the Institution. The acceptance of these offers, and the days and hours of each Medical officer's

attendance, to be regulated by the Committee, and the latter notified to the patients; every patient of all the three classes being permitted to have the advice of the practitioner, whom he prefers.

These regulations may be modified in different places, provided it be always kept in view, that the Dispensary is instituted for the benefit of those only, who cannot afford to pay the usual expenses attendant on sickness;—that the contributions required from the free members should be low enough to admit as many as possible to this class, of those who desire to belong to it, in order to separate and distinguish them from those who are unwilling to make any exertion for themselves;—and also, provided care be taken that in every case the medical practitioners should be paid for time and trouble, and not for drugs.

4. In order to show the progress which has been already made in effecting the objects contemplated by Mr. Smith's plan, the most satisfactory course will be to make extracts from the Reports of the Committees of Dispensaries already formed on it, and, from other sources of evidence, not only at Southam, where the first Dispensary was established, and is superintended by Mr. Smith, but at Atherstone, Coton, and Birmingham. Some

advantages of the plan which have not been noticed in the preceding pages, will be found to be stated in these documents, but many collateral benefits will be at once seen, to be likely to arise out of it, by those, to whom subjects of this nature are familiar.

Extract from the First Annual Report of the Atherton Self-supporting Dispensary Jan. 2, 1829.

IN submitting to this General Meeting their *First* Report, your Committee feel it their duty to recal to your recollection the principles on which your Dispensary was established: they were embodied in the Resolutions of the General Meeting of the 11th of February last, and are as follows:—

I. That District Dispensaries will aid the *able* and willing among the labouring classes to maintain themselves in honest independance.

II. That they will check mistaken charity, and point out those persons most worthy of assistance.

III. That they will save many from *becoming* paupers, and render unnecessary the removal of paupers to their parishes, in very many instances, thereby preventing great misery and expense.

IV. That they will have a great moral influence in impressing on their Members the value of good character, and importance of systematic and periodical savings, and the honour of independance.

V. That they will alleviate the distresses of paupers, and diminish the expense they occasion to parochial funds.

After making a statement of the funds, the report adds, that

The balance of £80. 11s. $3\frac{1}{2}d.$, in favour of the Dispensary, under the Free Members' Fund, has, by order of the Committee, been divided amongst the Medical Gentlemen of the Dispensary.

In tracing the progress of the Institution from its commencement to the present time, your Committee have only to express unmixed satisfaction. The present number of independent or Free Members is 764, and the number of applications for admission for the year 1829 is considerable.

As soon as the benefits of the institution were perceived, the Township of Atherstone became solicitous to take advantage of it for their poor, and on the 25th of March their paupers were admitted to such advantages as the Rules allow to that class of persons.

As appears by the Medical Report, 765 cases have received advice and medicines from the Institution; and your Committee can only attribute the very great numbers of patients entered in their books to the novelty of the Institution, and to the ease with which medical advice could there be procured, which induced a great number of trifling applications.

Your Institution has been presented with a stock of linen, by different benefactors, together with a bath

and other accommodations for the sick, value £20. 8s.; and also with an adequate supply of good soup and cordials. About 36 persons have been supplied with linen during illness, and many more with nutriment.

Feeling assured, as your Committee do of the value of the benefits arising from this Institution, they are anxious that the neighbouring parishes should participate in its advantages. They therefore recommend that free Members residing within four miles, and parishes within the same distance, subscribing for their poor, be admitted, under such rules and regulations as your Committee shall deem adviseable.

Your Committee cannot recognize the principle of extending this kind of beneficence to the lower classes altogether gratuitously, as has been done by the supporters of similar Institutions; for although it is true that of all professions, the one of Medicine enables a man to do the most good at the least expense, yet we also know our Free Members more value that advice for which they are allowed to pay according to their means.

We conceive it less derogatory to the feelings of the profession to receive a certain gross sum, rather than to send bills individually to this class of persons, and drive them eventually either to quackery or parish relief.

The Ladies' Committee have acted with a discretion and zeal that has attracted general admiration. They have visited regularly and impartially the Free Members, and have gained a salutary influence over them, which, without the regulations and system of this Dispensary, they could not have obtained. The discreet use of this

power constitutes one of the leading traits of this Charity; for it is by this means made evident to the honest and industrious that the desire of their superiors is to raise them, and to promote the happiness of them and their children.

In closing this Report, your Committee refer to their accounts as satisfactory evidence of the success of the experiment which has been made, and as affording presumptive proof that when the Atherstone Self-supporting District Dispensary shall have extended its exertions to its intended limits, it will have a moral and practical effect highly beneficial to this neighbourhood, and worthy of the attention of the country at large.

Signed on behalf of the Meeting,

JOSIAH ALLPORT, CHAIRMAN.

Town Hall, Atherstone, Jan. 2, 1829.

** * * The Second Atherstone Report of Jan. 27, 1830, is
equally favourable.*

The Reverend gentleman who signs the above Report, also addressed a letter, soon after publication, to the Editor of the Coventry Herald, from which the following is an extract.

It is, unhappily, a notion entertained by most persons whose attention has been called to the subject, that these Institutions should be founded, first, to better the mode of managing paupers. But to commence with those

already on the parish is beginning at the wrong end. The Institution should be formed for the benefit and preservation, *primarily*, of those who are not yet fallen into that deplorable gulph ; and, after its benefits have been felt among them, for some time, and been exhibited to others not too far fallen in their estimation to be insensible to the credit and respectability, as well as comfort and advantage, to be derived from being attached to a Self-supporting Dispensary, or not so totally degraded as to be indifferent to their recovery and restoration to similar independence and hope—then, but by no means till then, should any think of connecting their paupers therewith ; but *then* that step may be advantageously taken, both to aid the Dispensary, and secure better relief to the parish poor when they require it. By acting on this mode, we have had several within the last year who have relinquished parish aid, and become members of the Dispensary.

The following Certificate is from the Visitor of the Poor in the Parish of Southam :—

“ *Vestry Room, Southam,*
March 23, 1827.

“ As Visitor of the Poor of the Parish of Southam, I have had full opportunity, during the past year, of becoming acquainted with the effects of the District Dispensary, established by Mr. Smith in this town ; and I think it right to state that, in my opinion, *it has diminished the number of applicants for parish relief,*

and consequently improved the feelings of the labouring part of the population. Of upwards of 200 persons now subscribing to the above District Dispensary, it appears that *one-half would, most probably, but for that Institution, have been at this time on their respective parish lists.*

PRESTON MASH, Visitor."

The Conductors of a Dispensary, established on the above plan, at Chilvers Coton, in Warwickshire, have stated, in a recent communication to Mr. Smith, that out of a class of the population of that district, previously supposed to have little desire to make any exertion to become in any degree independent of Parish aid, *no less than 600 individuals have become Free Members of the Dispensary.* Among the regulations of the Dispensary, is one by which improper persons are excluded from the benefits of the Free Class; and another, by which any industrious Free Member who has subscribed for three years, or for a period which the Committee shall think sufficient, and is then unfortunately reduced to the necessity of applying to the Parish, may still be entitled to partake of the previous benefits he has enjoyed as a Free Member. A dispensary formed on this plan at Birmingham, has been found to proceed

so well, *that a second is about to be established.* Similar Dispensaries at Wellsbourne and Barford, in Warwickshire, have proceeded in a very satisfactory manner.

As far, then, as the plan proposed by Mr. Smith has been put to the test of experiment, it appears to be no less *practicable than useful*, wherever it has been adopted.

At an adjourned Meeting, held at 32, Sackville Street, on Monday, March 22, 1830, it was resolved that the Members present, with the addition of those disposed to assist, do form a Society for Promoting the objects of the Self-Supporting Dispensaries.

PRESIDENTS.

VISCOUNT ALTHORP, M. P.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD VERNON.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

THE VERY REV. DR. CHANDLER, DEAN OF CHICHESTER.

THE HON. C. B. PERCY, M. P.

SIR OSWALD MOSLEY, BART.

SIR GRAY SKIPWITH, BART.

E. J. SHIRLEY, ESQ., M. P.

E. B. PORTMAN, ESQ., M. P.

D. S. DUGDALE, ESQ., M. P.

F. LAWLEY, ESQ., M. P.
 R. A. SLANEY, ESQ., M. P.
 C. TENNYSON, ESQ., M. P.
 R. OTWAY CAVE, ESQ., M. P.
 JOHN TOMES, ESQ. M. P.

COMMITTEE.

JOHN HALL, ESQ.
 JOHN FINNEY, ESQ.
 JOHN CONOLLY, M. D.
 RICHARD DAVIE, M. D.
 JAMES YATES, ESQ.
 WILLIAM WARDROPER, ESQ.
 J. HOPE, M. D.
 — CALVERT, M. D.
 G. T. BURNETT, ESQ.
 R. BURMAN, ESQ.
 LEONARD STEWART, M. D.
 JAMES DURIE, M. D.

Communications respecting the objects of this Society may be made, *post free*, to Mr. H. L. Smith, Southam, Warwickshire; or to Dr. Conolly, Honorary Secretary of the Society, 50, Gloucester Place, Portman Square.

*Form of a Free Member's Recommendation
for a Blue Ticket.*

(on blue paper)

recommend A. B. as a privileged Free Member of the Chilvers Coton Self-Supporting Dispensary ; believing to be a deserving and worthy Member of the First Class.

**** To be signed by a Subscriber, or by two respectable Neighbours, who are requested to take notice that this Institution is intended for such only as are unable to pay a regular Surgeon for his Services, and it is expected that no other will apply. The Recommendation to be presented to the Secretary, at the Dispensary, on any Monday morning, at Half-past Ten o'Clock.**

Form of Charity Member's Ticket.

(on white paper.)

I solicit for A. B. the privilege of Medical Attendance ;
considering a proper object of Charity, of
the Second Class.

Honorary Subscriber.

The Bearer of this Ticket is to notify his or her discharge to the Honorary Subscriber, whose name is annexed.

Form of Pauper's Ticket.

(Yellow Paper.)

OVERSEER'S CERTIFICATE.

This is to certify that A. B. is a Pauper of the Parish of
and I shall be obliged to you to admit
as a Patient of the Third Class.

Overseer.

N. B. No Person of this Third Class (dependent on the Labour of others) to be allowed the extra privilege of the Free Members.

REGULATIONS

EXTRACTED FROM THE RULES OF THE

ATHERSTONE SELF-SUPPORTING DISPENSARY.

THE Free Members consist of Mechanics, Servants, and Poor Persons not receiving Parish Relief.

Persons wishing to become Members must leave their Names and Places of Abode at the Dispensary, in writing, one Week before one of the Monthly Committee Meetings, which are held the first Monday in every Month, between Ten and Eleven o'Clock.

The Subscription for every Member above Twelve years old, is One Penny a Week.

For One or Two Children of the same Family, under Twelve years old, One Halfpenny a Week.

For more than Two Children in the same Family, under Twelve years old, One Penny a Week.

No Member is entitled to Relief, unless all arrears are paid up.

Every Member being One Month in arrear, must pay a Fine of One Penny.

If Two Months in arrear, a Fine of Three Pence.

After any Member shall be reported Three Months in arrear, he shall be excluded from the Society.

All Subscriptions are to commence from the 1st of January in each year, and may be paid in advance.

Members are entitled to Medical and Surgical Advice and Medicines at the Dispensary; and Attendance in Midwifery.

A Surgeon will attend daily (Sunday excepted) at the Dispensary, between the hours of Nine and Ten o'Clock, between which hours all Patients must attend for advice, if able.

Patients not able to attend at the Dispensary, may be visited at their Houses, by the Medical Man they may name, on applying to the Dispenser for a Note; and have a consultation of Surgeons, if necessary.

Patients must find their own Bottles, Bandages, &c., and must apply at the Dispensary for all Medicines, between the hours of One and Two o'Clock (unless otherwise directed by the Surgeon).

In cases of accident or sudden illness, members may have immediate medical attendance, on applying to the dispenser for a note.

Any Woman requiring a Midwife, must give notice to the dispenser Six Weeks before she expects to be confined.

Any woman wishing to be attended in her confinement by a Surgeon, and paying Eight Shillings to the dispenser before she is confined, may, by giving Six Weeks' Notice to the Dispenser, and obtaining a Note from him, be attended by any of the Dispensary Surgeons she may name.

If any Patients neglect to attend at the Dispensary for Three Weeks, without the permission of the Surgeon who attends them, such Patients will be considered as discharged.

All Patients wishing to declare off the Medical Books, are required to go to the Surgeon who attended them at the Dispensary, to state the same, and must at the same time deliver in their Prescriptions to be filed.

Children of Members may be Vaccinated gratis at the Dispensary.

All Persons neglecting to comply with the above Regulations, will be reported to the Committee, and be liable to be discharged.

For further information see the printed Rules.

A distinct Fund has been raised, by Donations and Subscriptions of Honorary Members, to assist the deserving and industrious Free Members in Sickness.

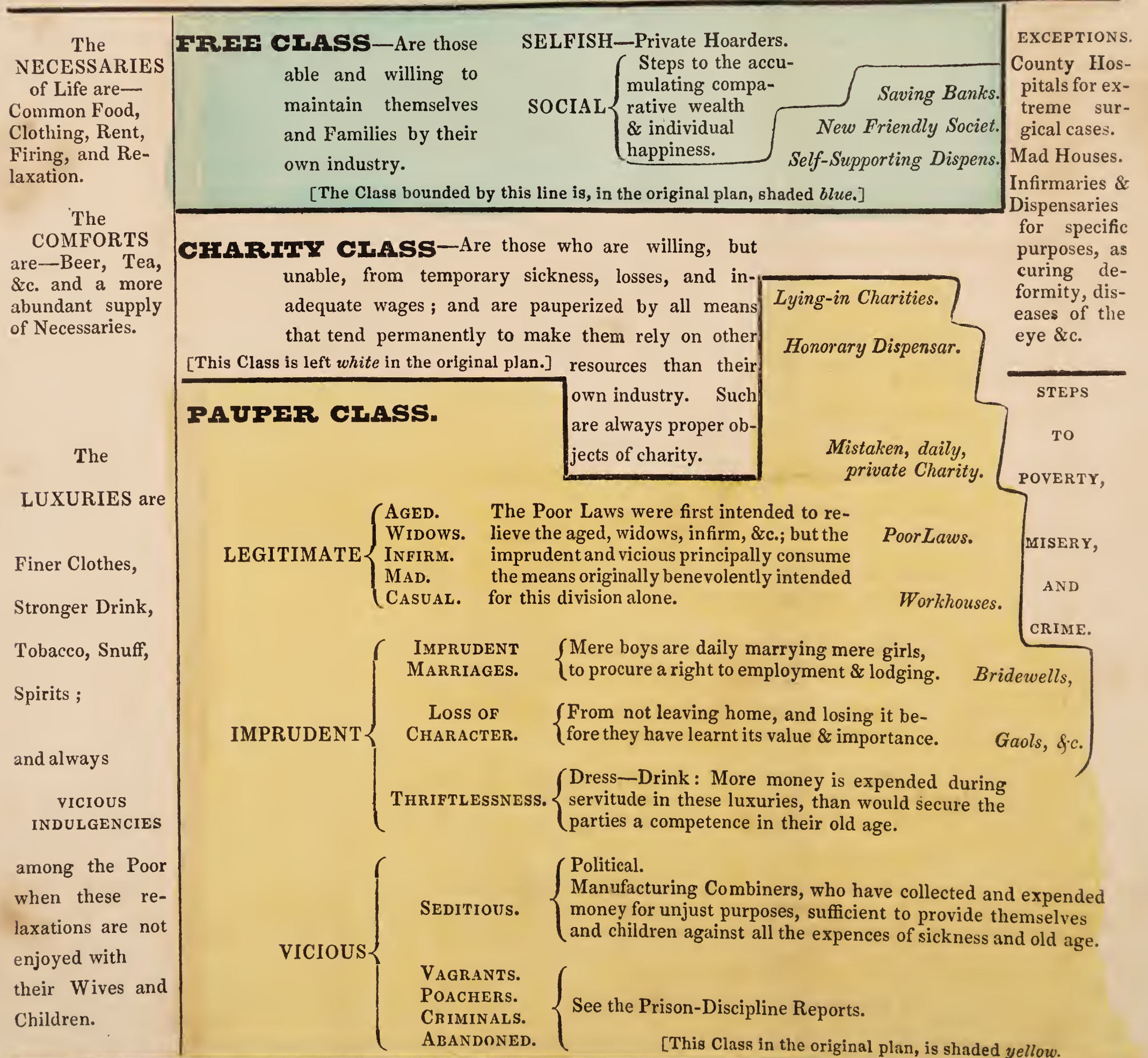
This Fund is employed in supplying Cordials and Linen gratis, and paying nurses appointed under the direction of the Medical Men, assisted by a Committee of Ladies.

No part of the Free Members' Fund is applied for this purpose.

May 5, 1828.



A CLASSIFICATION of MANUAL LABOURERS, by the Practical Application of which in SELF-SUPPORTING, CHARITABLE and PAROCHIAL DISPENSARIES, our Philanthropy may be reduced to a System, our best Class of Poor prevented from retrograding into Pauperism, and our necessitous and legitimate Paupers separated from the comparatively improvident and vicious.



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LC 7 4475

5/-

RECEIVED BY THE SECRETARY OF THE
TREASURY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C.
JAN 10 1934



THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE
REVENUE RECEIVED FROM THE
SALES OF THE UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PAPER MONEY
DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY, 1934.

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